



MINNESOTA BOARD OF NURSING

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Scope of Practice of Nursing Students During Work Experiences

The Minnesota Board of Nursing staff often has requests for information regarding “nursing student work experiences”. The questions primarily refer to scope of practice. Board staff base the response on the following statutory provisions related to who may practice nursing in Minnesota:

Minnesota Statutes, sections 148.171 through 148.285, commonly referred to as the Nurse Practice Act, govern the practice of nursing in Minnesota. Basically, the law provides that any individual who practices professional or practical nursing in Minnesota must be licensed by the Minnesota Board of Nursing. However, the law does provide for certain exemptions from the licensure requirement.

Minnesota Statutes, section 148.271, provides that an individual may practice nursing in Minnesota, without a Minnesota nursing license, in specific situations. Paragraph (7) states that the Nurse Practice Act does not prohibit “professional or practical nursing practice **by a student practicing under the supervision of an instructor while the student is enrolled in a nursing program** approved by the board under section 148.251.” Further, paragraph (4) states that the Nurse Practice Act does not prohibit “the provision of nursing or **nursing-related service by a nursing assistant** who has been delegated the specific function and is supervised by a registered nurse or monitored by a licensed practical nurse.” (emphasis added)

Minnesota Rule 6301.0100 subpart 11 defines faculty as the director and other individuals designated by the controlling body as having ongoing responsibility for teaching or evaluating student learning in the program. Additionally, Minnesota Rule 6301.1700 subpart 1 specifies that whenever a program uses a clinical setting to meet requirements, registered professional nurse faculty members must be responsible for determining clinical learning activities and for guiding and evaluating students in that setting.

The scope of practice by a **student practicing under the supervision of an instructor** while the student is enrolled in a nursing program is not restricted in the statute; however, in Minnesota Statutes section 148.171, subdivision 12, the scope of practice for the nursing assistant is limited by the definition that a “nursing assistant means an individual providing nursing or nursing-related services **that do not require the specialized knowledge and skill of a nurse**, at the direction of a nurse.” The Board interprets these provisions to mean that an individual, who happens to be a nursing student, may be employed as an unlicensed assistive personnel and must function within the scope of practice of that category as provided in the law.

Please visit the Minnesota Board of Nursing web site at www.nursingboard.state.mn.us for additional information about the statutes and rules governing the practice, credentialing, and education of nurses in Minnesota.